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14 March 1989

The Hon. Senator William Cohen of Maine
Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C.

Dear Senator Cohen:

Recently I read two books which are on the shelves of the Maine State Library in Augusta on the subject of Raoul Wallenberg. The books are Righteous Gentile, The Story of Raoul Wallenberg, Missing Hero of the Holocaust, by John Bierman; and Lost Hero: The Mystery of Raoul Wallenberg, by Frederick E. Werbell and Thurston Clarke.

Before reading these books, I was unaware of the story of Raoul Wallenberg, although I had seen his name very occasionally in newspapers and magazines. Now that I am aware of his great deeds to save the lives of many thousands of Hungarian Jews during World War II, I join with those who have asked our government to seek to obtain from the government of the Soviet Union an explanation of the case of Raoul Wallenberg, who may have been alive in a Soviet prison as late as the early 1980's (when the above mentioned book were published.)

I am assuming that you are aware of this courageous man who acted morally and honorably at a time when most of the world had gone mad. So I will not need to go into the details of this case. But perhaps there has not been much of a request from your constituents to pursue this matter, as it may not seem to be of much importance at a time when there is so much in the nation and the world that of more pressing concern. But I would urge you to use the weight and influence of your high office to make the requests through our President or through the proper diplomatic channels to the leaders of the Soviet Union, to ask the question--"What was or is the fate of Raoul Wallenberg?" I believe that it is the least that we as a nation can do, to honor the decency and the extraordinary conduct of one individual human being to whom many Jews today owe their lives.

I am enclosing a photocopy of a page from a book Against Silence, The Voice and Vision of Elie Wiesel, edited by Irving Abrahamson, (this book also is available from the Maine State Library), on which is printed a message to the Free Wallenberg Committee, a group of which I am unaware. So, it appears that Mr. Wiesel is also concerned about the matter of Raoul Wallenberg, and I believe that Mr. Wiesel is a man for whom the U.S. Government has a high regard.

I hope that you will be able to inform me of any efforts on your part, or on the part of others in our government, to make the frank requests of the Soviet government which need to be made. I think it would be indeed a tragedy if someone as good and decent as Raoul Wallenberg was to be forgotten. The world knows enough of the tyrants and terrorists of humankind. We need to know and to honor the individuals who have acted from the best part of the human soul.

Yours sincerely,

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